

## CONTENTS

<i>Bibliography of Books and Articles by Ronald Eric Emmerick</i> . Compiled by M. Maggi . . . . .	4
<i>TEXTS AND MANUSCRIPTS: DESCRIPTION AND RESEARCH</i> . . . . .	6
<b>M. Maggi</b> . Two Reinterpretations in the Khotanese <i>Sudhanāvādāna</i> . . . . .	6
<b>M. Vorobyova-Desyatovskaya</b> . Tibetan Eighth-Century Documents on Wood from Miran . . . . .	9
<b>O. Akimushkin</b> . The Library-Workshop ( <i>kitābhāna</i> ) of Bāysunghur-Mirzā in Herat . . . . .	14
<i>TEXT AND ITS CULTURAL INTERPRETATION</i> . . . . .	25
<b>E. Rezvan</b> . The Qurʾān and Its World: II. The Miracle of the Book (The Qurʾān and Pre-Islamic Literature) . . . . .	25
<i>PRESENTING THE COLLECTIONS</i> . . . . .	33
<b>T. Pang</b> . Manchu Collections in Paris . . . . .	33
<i>ORIENTAL MANUSCRIPTS AND NEW INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES</i> . . . . .	40
<b>Val. Polosin, E. Rezvan</b> . To the CD-ROM Edition of the St. Petersburg Arabic Bible . . . . .	40
<i>PRESENTING THE MANUSCRIPT</i> . . . . .	48
<b>A. Kabanoff</b> . On an Anonymous Manuscript <i>Higashi Ezo iko</i> . . . . .	48
<i>ORIENTAL ICONOGRAPHY: SEMANTICS</i> . . . . .	51
<b>K. Samosyuk</b> . The Guanyin Icon from Khara-Khoto . . . . .	51
<b>Reza T. Ahmadi</b> . Symbolism in Persian Rugs . . . . .	62
<i>BOOK REVIEWS</i> . . . . .	65

### COLOUR PLATES

#### Front cover:

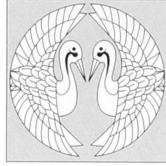
Winding up threads into balls, 17.7×26.5 cm, an illustration to the anonymous manuscript *Higashi Ezo iko*, Manuscript fund of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies.

#### Back cover:

**Plate 1.** The Ainu loom, 38.2×26.5 cm, an illustration to the anonymous manuscript *Higashi Ezo iko*, Manuscript fund of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies.

**Plate 2.** The weaving process (*attush-kar*), 38.2×26.5 cm, an illustration of the anonymous manuscript *Higashi Ezo iko*, Manuscript fund of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies.

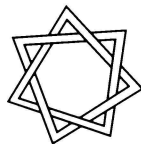
RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES  
THE INSTITUTE OF ORIENTAL STUDIES  
ST.PETERSBURG BRANCH



# **Manuscripta Orientalia**

*International Journal for Oriental Manuscript Research*

Vol. 3 No. 1 March 1997



**ИВЭСА**  
**St. Petersburg-Helsinki**

V. D. Ushakov. *Frazeologija Korana*. Moscow: Vostochnaya Literatura, 1996, 203 str.

V. D. Ushakov. *Phraseology of the Qur'an*. Moscow: Vostochnaya Literatura, 1996. 203 pp.

Throughout the Islamic world the Qur'an is accepted as a sacred code embodying religious, legal, ethical, moral, social, and other regulations which are believed to have been given in a perfect, unsurpassed form and style. The Arabic language of the Holy Book, with its rhythmic, structure and enormous expressive ability, is regarded as the very speech of God as revealed through the prophet Muhammad. It has always played a significant role in the development (and the preservation) of written Arabic. Alongside pre-Islamic poetry, the Qur'an is the earliest written monument of Arabic literature and culture, and it begins a long and extremely rich tradition of belles-lettres, theology, and linguistics.

From the time of the great expansion of the Arab Muslim tribes and the founding of a huge Islamic empire, the Qur'an became a central and permanent object of medieval scholarly research. It was studied from a variety of points of view, and virtually all different aspects of the text were taken into consideration. The religious, legal, and social systems put forward in the Qur'an, as well as the systems of esthetics and rhetoric of which it makes use, have been the subject of works written over a period of many centuries, but special attention has always been paid to the language of the book. Medieval Arabic scholars have left us profound and detailed studies concerning different aspects of the linguistic merits of the Qur'an. They were interested in peculiar or rare words and expressions, and they studied thoroughly all phonetic, grammatical, semantic, and stylistic features and characteristics of the Holy Book, as well as the inimitability of its language.

Modern scholars also show a particular interest in both the language and style of the Qur'an. Applying new approaches and most modern linguistic methods, they make their studies, confirming or revising the ideas and theories of their predecessors. A number of recent investigations have been focused on the nature of the Qur'an's idiomatic expressions, word combinations, figures of speech, aphorisms, proverbs, and the like.

Dr Ushakov's book on Qur'anic phraseological formations is one of the most recent studies in the field and represents a significant step forward, since it not only summarizes the work made by traditional Arab scholars but also gives a new and well organized survey of the different kinds of set expressions in the Qur'an. The importance of the monograph lies also in the special attention it gives to the "style-forming" nature of various phraseological collocations and, in general, to the role of the system of figurative techniques in the Qur'an. In order to corroborate his views and his method of organization of the material, the author does not restrict himself only to Qur'anic expressions. He takes into consideration idioms, phraseological collocations, sayings, and proverbs which were common throughout the classical age of the Arabic language, from the sixth to the twelfth century A.D. In addition, Dr Ushakov often refers to the Bible and to ancient customs and beliefs of the peoples of the Arabian Peninsula to demonstrate how much in the Qur'an is a continuation of a long tradition. At the same time the author stresses

the enormous influence of Qur'anic phraseology on modern Arabic.

The book comprises an introduction and five chapters followed by a summary and a supplement. In his introduction (pp. 6—14) Dr Ushakov gives a short review of current approaches in modern linguistics to the study of phraseology (idiomatic expressions) and states his adherence to recent Russian theory in this area. He defines his goal as the study of the phraseology of the Qur'an both as text and as recorded speech. Thus he deals with various phraseological collocations, idiomatic word combinations and phrases, aphorisms, and proverbs providing the examples not only of written language but also of spoken one, with its special features. Chapter one (pp. 14—25) covers the problem of how classical Arabic lexicology and rhetoric treat petrified (fossilized) collocations and phrases, the ways they were created, and the importance of their correct usage. The author presents mainly the views of 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī about the mechanisms of phrase formation. In chapters two (pp. 25—44) and three (pp. 44—100), the author gives a detailed structural and semantic analysis of phraseological units as such, nominal and verbal phraseological collocations and sentences, suggesting strict rules for distinguishing between collocation and sentence, a delicate and so far unresolved problem in Arabic.

Chapter four (pp. 100—27) is dedicated to aphoristic sayings of proverbial nature and to proverbs as such, while chapter five (pp. 127—55) deals with artistic similes. The author's analysis of Qur'anic phraseological collocations reveals the frequent occurrence of kinematic and somatic phraseological units, nominal and semi-idiomatic verbal periphrases, and extended artistic similes. These stylistic elements, especially the kinematic and somatic collocations, are primarily used to express the inner world of feelings, emotions, and experience, which are strongly connected with man's attitude towards religion. The author's observations on the semantics of the words preferred in Qur'anic phraseological collocations are interesting and helpful. Moreover, his detailed presentation of the different ways of structurally organizing sentences describing the same situation and his extended study of the synonyms rendering several abstract meanings in the Qur'an should be considered a contribution to the development of a new approach. Dr Ushakov also discusses how the use of semi-idiomatic periphrases, which express subject-object relations from different angles, enables a reader to assess situations and their participants differently. His study demonstrates that all these elements play a very important ideological and stylistic role in the text of the Qur'an.

The author of the book constantly points to the reasons behind the use of certain phrases in their more "literal" meaning, the repetitions, or, for example, the prevalence of imperative forms, relating them to the normative and prescriptive nature of the Holy Book. His observations are helpful in demonstrating, on the basis of linguistic (lexical, grammatical, syntactic) and stylistic criteria, the sententious and didactic nature of the set expressions in the Qur'an in comparison with those of poetry and "everyday life" from the same period. The difference between them, as Dr Ushakov stresses, is as well a function of the deep philosophical, esthetic, and religious content of the Qur'an, the expression of which also requires special stylistic tech-

niques. Non-Qur'ānic set expressions, as the author shows, are built on a more concrete and direct perception of the world.

The supplement (pp. 167—96) deserves particular mention because it lists most of the phraseological collocations in the Qur'ān and indicates where they occur in the text. All of them are translated.

Dr Ushakov's study, with its expanded linguistic and stylistic analysis of the phraseological aspects of the text of

the Qur'ān, is an important contribution to the elucidation of the role of figurative techniques in this remarkable piece of literature. The results and the conclusions he presents are interesting and important not only for the study of the phraseology and style of the Qur'ān, but also for further comparative and diachronic studies in the field of Arabic phraseology in general.

*L. Torlakova*

---